

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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ACDA-10 IO-13 EB-07 NRC-07 OES-06 ERDA-07 FEA-01

DHA-02 /125 W

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R 101140Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9066

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

UNCLAS BRASILIA 10123

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH ENRG PARM BR GW

SUBJECT: BRAZILIAN CONGRESSIONAL REACTION TO PRESIDENT-ELECT'S
STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ON-PROLIFERATION

REF: (A) BRASILIA 9622, (B) BRASILIA 9631, (C) BRASILIA 9859

1. SUMMARY. ECHOING SUBSTANTIAL PRESS COMMENT THE PREVIOUS WEEKS (REFTELS), BRAZILIAN CONGRESS, AFTER TWO WEEKS OF SILENCE, TOOK UP THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S NOVEMBER 15 STATEMENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND NUCLEAR REPROCESSING. GOVERNMENT PARTY (ARENA) SPOKESMEN, NOT WISHING TO COMPLICATE THE POSITION OF THE GEISEL ADMINISTRATION, VOICED RELATIVELY MILD CRITICISM. OPPOSITION (MDB) SPOKESMAN, WHILE WELCOMING PRESIDENT-ELECT'S HUMAN RIGHTS REMARKS, DEFENDED GOB-FRG NUCLEAR ACCORD. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING PAST WEEK (NOVEMBER 29 - DECEMBER 4), FOLLOWING TWO WEEKS OF SILENCE, THE BRAZILIAN CONGRESS TOOK UP PRESIDENT-ELECT'S NOVEMBER 15 SPEECH. PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE GOVERNMENT (ARENA) PARTY WAS RELUCTANT TO DO SO, RESPECTING THE GEISEL ADMINISTRATION'S WISHES TO LET THE ISSUE SUBSIDE, AND TO AVOID FRICTION WITH THE NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION. ITS HAND, ULTIMATELY, WAS FORCED
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BY THE OPPOSITION. THE MDB'S CONGRESSIONAL GROUP, IN A CAUCUS

ON NOVEMBER 25, DECIDED TO PROTEST THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REMARKS, WITH SENATOR PAULO BROSSARD SPEAKING FOR THE PARTY (JORNAL DO BRASIL, NOVEMBER 28).

3. FACED WITH A MAJOR STATEMENT BY THE OPPOSITION, THE ARENA LEADERSHIP DECIDED TO SPEAK OUT ON ITS OWN. ON NOVEMBER 29, SENADOR EURICO RESENDE, DEPUTY SENATE LEADER OF THE ARENA, EXPRESSED THE CONVICTION THAT THE PRESIDENT-ELECT WOULD UNDERSTAND HE COULD NOT, EVEN THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, ATTEMPT TO IMPEDE THE EXECUTION OF THE GOB-FRG NUCLEAR ACCORD. RESENDE ALSO SAID HE HOPED CARTER'S VIEWS AS PRESIDENT WOULD BE DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. DEPUTY NELSON MARCHEZAN, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ARENA, COMMENTED THAT BROSSARD'S FORTHCOMING SPEECH WAS SIMPLY INTENDED TO SEEK PUBLICITY. FOLHA DE SAO PAULO (NOVEMBER 30) REPORTING THE ARENA STATEMENTS, OBSERVED THAT THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S REMARKS HAD BEEN MADE SOME TIME BACK AND THAT THE RESENDE STATEMENT WAS AN ATTEMPT TO DEFLATE BROSSARD'S EXPECTED SPEECH.

MEANWHILE, ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, FORCES WITHIN THE MDB BEGAN TO EXERT PRESSURE ON BROSSARD TO MODERATE HIS STATEMENT WHICH, AFTER CONSIDERABLE DELAY, WAS FINALLY DELIVERED ON DECEMBER 2. ACCORDING TO FOLHA (NOVEMBER 30), UNNAMED MDB SENATORS URGED BROSSARD TO CONSIDER HIS STATEMENT VERY CAREFULLY. WHILE MAKING CLEAR THAT THE MDB SUPPORTS THE NUCLEAR ACCORD, SO THESE SENATORS REASONED, THE STATEMENT SHOULD NOT TRANSFORM REPUDIATION OF THE NOVEMBER 15 REMARKS INTO OPEN HOSTILITY TO THE PRESIDENT-ELECT, "ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY DO NOT VERY MUCH BELIEVE THAT (THE PRESIDENT-ELECT) WILL REALLY TRY TO DAMAGE THE NUCLEAR AGREEMENT." GOVERNOR CARTER HAD DEMONSTRATED HIS CONCERN THAT MILITARY GOVERNMENTS REESTABLISH DEMOCRACY, A POLICY WHICH, IN ITS GLOBAL CHARACTER, THE OPPOSITION COULD NOT FAIL TO SUPPORT. IT WAS NOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE OPPOSITION, ACCORDING TO THESE SOURCES, TO MAKE UP FOR THE FOREIGN MINISTRY'S OMISSIONS (FOLHA, NOVEMBER 30).

5. BROSSARD OPENED HIS DECEMBER 2 SPEECH BY WELCOMING THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS -- A HUMANISTIC POSITION
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" SO MUCH MORE SIGNIFICANT AS THE INFLUENCES EXECUTED BY HIS COUNTRY IN A DIRECTION DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSED TO THAT NOW ANNOUNCED HAVE BECOME WIDELY KNOWN AND ADMITTED." WHILE THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S ATTITUDE ON HUMAN RIGHTS WAS "BENEFICIAL", HIS STATEMENT ON THE NUCLEAR ACCORD WAS A DIFFERENT MATTER. ALLEGEDLY REVIEWING THE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S WORDS, BROSSARD CLAIMED THAT GOVERNOR CARTER HAD SAID HE WOULD SEEK THE ABROGATION OF THE SALE OF

"NUCLEAR PLANTS" AND THAT HE HAD ONLY LATER, MORE SPECIFICALLY, SPOKEN OF REPROCESSING PLANTS. IN A SERIES OF RHETORICAL QUESTIONS, BROSSARD THEN RECAPITULATED THE STANDARD BRAZILIAN ARGUMENTS IN DEFENSE OF THE NUCLEAR AGREEMENT. BROSSARD CONCLUDED HIS SPEECH WITH TWO THOUGHTS: IF THE US WAS SINCERELY CONCERNED WITH THE RISKS OF NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION, IT SHOULD USE ITS INFLUENCE TO INCREASE THE EFFICIENCY OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. (HE MENTIONED THE NPT AS WELL AS THE IAEA.) SECONDLY, NOTING SUGGESTIONS IN ARGENTINA FOR BILATERAL NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH BRAZIL, HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THESE IDEAS WOULD RECEIVE THE ATTENTION IN THE GOB THAT THEY DESERVED. THERE WAS NO PLACE FOR STERILE RIVALRY; BRAZIL'S RELATIONS WITH ARGENTINA HAD ALWAYS BEEN SPECIAL AND SHOULD REMAIN THIS WAY.

6. ONLY OFFICIAL ARENA COMMENT WAS BY SENATOR RESENDE WHO TERMED BROSSARD'S ENDORSEMENT OF GOVERNOR CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS STAND "MELANCHOLY, NEGATIVE, AND PROFOUNDLY DISAPPOINTING" (CORREIO BRASILIENSE, DECEMBER 3). "WE LIVE IN A COUNTRY," RESENDE SAID, "WHERE THE EXECUTIVE IS PROVIDING ITSELF WITH VIGOROUS INSTRUMENTS TO DEFEND AND PERFECT THE POLITICAL PRACTICES, IN SEARCH OF A RESPONSIBLE DEMOCRACY AND NOW, WITHIN OUR OWN FRONTIERS, WE HAVE ACHIEVED POPULAR CONFIDENCE AND OUTSIDE THE PROJECTION OF AN IMAGE OF ASSURANCE AND RESPECT." RESENDE DID NOT TAKE UP BROSSARD'S DISCUSSION OF THE NUCLEAR ACCORD.

7. COMMENT. CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE, SLOW TO START, HAS BEEN MODERATE, AND PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN LIMITED. THE DELAYED BROSSARD SPEECH WAS GIVEN DETAILED SUMMARY ONLY IN LOCAL BRASILIA PAPERS AND THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE PRESS COMMENT ON CARTER STATEMENT SINCE UNCLASSIFIED

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THEN. BRAZILIAN CONGRESS IS NOW IN RECESS. WE CONSIDER IT LIKELY THAT PUBLIC DEBATE OF THIS ISSUE WILL NOW REMAIN IN LOW KEY UNTIL NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION TAKES INITIATIVES VISIBLE TO THE BRAZILIAN PUBLIC IN THIS AREA. CRIMMINS

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